



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
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OPNAVINST 1742.1
PERS-662
14 Aug 2002

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1742.1

From: Chief of Naval Operations
To: All Ships and Stations (less Marine Corps field
addressees not having Navy personnel attached)

Subj: NAVY VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NVAP)

Ref: (a) DODD 1000.4 of 3 Jun 02 (NOTAL)
(b) 42 U.S.C., 1973ff
(c) 10 U.S.C., 1566
(d) OPNAVNOTE 5450, Sequential and Major Command Lists

Encl: (1) Recommended Command Inspection Checklist
(2) Definitions

1. Purpose. To establish policy and assign responsibilities for the Navy Voting Assistance Program (NVAP) per references (a) through (d).

2. Policy

a. These policies and responsibilities apply to operating forces and shore establishments of the U.S. Navy. All commands shall adopt procedures, which conform to this instruction to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with their organization and operational commitments.

b. NVAP shall be administered to ensure eligible voters are provided information about registration procedures and voter materials pertaining to scheduled elections, including dates, offices involved, constitutional amendments, and other ballot proposals.

c. Commanders, commanding officers (COs), and officers in charge (OICs) shall encourage eligible voters in their organization to participate in elections for Federal, State, and local office.

d. All eligible voters shall be afforded an opportunity to register and vote in any election for which they are eligible, unless precluded by military necessity.

e. Voting, in person or by absentee process, shall be offered when local conditions allow eligible voters to participate in the electoral process.

f. Voting assistance shall be provided in such a manner as to safeguard integrity of the electoral process and secrecy of the ballot.

g. All necessary steps shall be taken to prevent fraud and to protect voters against any coercion, to include the following:

(1) No Navy member shall attempt to influence any other member to vote or not to vote, or require any member to march to any polling place or place of voting. Nothing in this instruction prohibits free discussion about political issues or candidates for public office.

(2) No person shall poll any voter in the Department of the Navy (DON) before or after they vote beyond official surveys authorized by reference (b).

3. Responsibilities

a. Assistant Commander, Navy Personnel Command, Personal Readiness and Community Support (ACNPC) (PERS-6), is designated the Senior Navy Voting Representative (SNVR) to carry out management of NVAP.

b. SNVR shall assign, as an assistant, a Navy Voting Action Officer (NVAO) who will be permanently assigned within the same organization as SNVR. NVAO will be a civilian at a GS-12 or above level, or a servicemember in paygrade O4/E8 or above. NVAO shall, at the discretion of the SNVR:

(1) serve as main contact for SNVR.

(2) manage NVAP for all eligible DON voters (military and civilian) to assist those personnel to vote.

(3) establish and maintain coordination with the Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) designated by Navy Immediate Superiors in Command (ISIC) (see paragraph 3d below).

(4) ensure SVAOs are trained to effectively carry out their responsibilities. Such training will be obtained through Voting Action Workshops conducted by Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) or by a presentation found on the FVAP and the NVAP web site, www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap.

(5) encourage commands to support the NVAP at all levels.

(6) establish and maintain liaison with officials of the FVAP.

(7) publicize the right of citizens to participate in the electoral process.

(8) provide for continuing evaluation of NVAP.

(9) establish and publicize the Navy Voting Action phone line that can be accessed by visiting the NVAP web site, www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap.

(10) assist in conducting official surveys as directed in reference(a).

c. ISICs shall include a review of the voting program during all routine inspections and at a minimum every 3 years. Enclosure (1) is provided as a recommended checklist. This inspection should be in conjunction with other scheduled command inspections and shall be made available for internal IG review as required by reference (a).

d. COs of Major Shore Commands designated in enclosure (3) or reference (d) shall assign a SVAO, who will be a civilian employee at a GS-12 or above level where possible, or a servicemember in paygrade 04 or above. SVAO shall

(1) serve as principal local point of contact for NVAP issues.

(2) monitor subordinate commands' voting programs and assist tenant commands with theirs.

e. Each ISIC and each installation commander must appoint a Voting Assistance Officer (VAO). Individual COs and OICs must appoint a Voting Officer (VO).

(1) VAOs/VOs must be trained to effectively carry out their responsibilities. Such training will be obtained through Voting Action Workshops conducted by FVAP or by a presentation found on the FVAP and the NVAP web site, www.fvap.ncr.gov or www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap.

(2) VAOs will be a civilian at a GS-12 or above level where possible, or a servicemember in paygrade 04 or above or E8 or above. VAOs shall

(a) serve as main point of contact for the SVAO or their designees.

(b) provide support to subordinate commands' voting program and manage subordinate commands/voting programs when the command has less than 25 assigned members.

(c) ensure subordinate commands of 25 or more permanently assigned members appoint a VO.

(d) ensure VOs receive training to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

(e) ensure at least one well advertised fixed location is provided where absentee voting material and voting assistance is available to all military personnel, family members, and civilian employees. Locations may include legal offices, Fleet & Family Support Centers (FFSCs), community centers, etc.

(f) administer oaths in connection with voting registration and voting.

(g) assist in conducting official surveys as specified by reference (a).

(h) provide telephone operators at naval facilities the names and phone numbers for the VAOs.

(i) ensure office telephone numbers and E-Mail addresses for all VAOs and assistants are updated quarterly and submitted to the SVAO.

(j) provide for continuing evaluation of subordinate command voting programs using guidelines in enclosure (1).

(3) VOs and any appointed Assistant Voting Officers (AVOs) shall

(a) serve as main point of contact for the VAO or their designees.

(b) encourage command support of NVAP.

(c) be readily available and equipped to give personal assistance to voters, military, civilians, and retirees for all elections.

(d) disseminate voting information and provide assistance to eligible voters in the organization, to include acting as an official to administer oaths.

(e) obtain and expeditiously disseminate voting information and related materials, such as the Voting Assistance Guide; SF-76, Federal Post Card Application; and SF-186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. Materials are to be available in sufficient quantities to furnish registration and ballot request support for all elections.

(f) ensure in-hand delivery of SF-76s by 15 January of each calendar year to eligible voters and their voting age dependents.

(g) ensure availability of SF-76s for distribution by 15 August of even numbered years to all eligible voters who are serving outside territorial limits of the United States.

(h) ensure availability of SF-76s for distribution by 15 September of even numbered years to all eligible voters in the United States.

(i) ensure office telephone numbers and, if available, E-Mail addresses for all VOs and assistants are updated quarterly and submitted to the VAO.

(j) administer oaths in connection with registration and voting.

(k) assist in conducting official surveys as specified by reference (a).

(l) conduct a command level voting assistance program evaluation at the conclusion of every election year and forward evaluation to CO or OIC for review. File for 3 years as specified by enclosure (1).

(m) throughout the year raise awareness of the voting processes and publicize election information.

(n) designate at least one well advertised fixed location within the command where absentee voting material and voting assistance is available to all-military personnel, family members, and civilian employees.

(o) publicize voting information to include, but not limited by, Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM) NVAP web site www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap, and FVAP web site, www.fvap.ncr.gov through various communications media such as ship or station newspapers; bulletins; plans of the day; public address system announcements; shipboard information, training and entertainment systems afloat; Navy Broadcasting Service Detachments ashore and E-Mail.

(p) attend a FVAP Workshop during even numbered years with elections for Federal offices, or prior to assuming the responsibilities as a VO/AVO, obtain training/instruction from the FVAP or the FVAP/NVAP web site, <http://www.fvap.ncr.gov/> or www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap.

(q) conduct training annually within the command. Basic training and command courses shall instruct on absentee registration and voting, and make available voting information, supplies and personal assistance.

(r) during predeployment briefs, ensure voting information is shared and voting supplies are provided well in advance of Federal and State elections for commands/activities.

4. Evaluation. NAVINSGEN should include NVAP in its command inspections every 3 years.

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5. Definitions. Terms used in this instruction are defined in enclosure (2).

6. Point of Contact. NAVPERSCOM (PERS-662B), (901) 874-4369/
DSN 882 or E-Mail: p662b@persnet.navy.mil.

7. Reports and Forms

a. Reporting requirement contained in paragraph 4 is exempt from reports control per SECNAVINST 5214.2B.

b. SF-76, Registration and Absentee Ballot Request - Federal Post Card Application, SF-186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot, and Federal Voting Assistance Guide, are available through the Naval Inventory Control Point using requisitioning procedures contained in CD-ROM NAVSUP PUB 600(NLL), Navy Stock List of Publications and Forms.

c. NAVPERS 1070/613 (Rev. 10-81), Administrative Remarks can be obtained online at <http://forms.daps.mil/order/>.

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Distribution:
SNDL Parts 1 and 2

**RECOMMENDED INSPECTING COMMAND CHECKLIST
HEADS OF DOD COMPONENTS AND THE UNIFORMED SERVICES**

1. Has the component developed written policies to support the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for all service members and their dependents, and DOD civilians including those deployed, TDY, and tenant organizations? Provide date of guidance revisions.
2. What was the ratio or maximum number of voters that can be represented by a Voting Officer (VO) established by the component?
3. How did the component ensure command support at all levels for the FVAP?
4. Did the component designate a uniformed officer or general or flag rank as the "Senior Navy Voting Representative (SNVR)," to manage their respective Service voting programs? Provide name, rank, and phone number.
5. Has the component designated a Navy Voting Action Officer (NVAO), preferably a civilian employee (GS-12 or higher or 04/E8) to assist the SNVR? Provide name, rank or grade level, and phone number.
6. At what level of command did components require SVAO and VAOs?
7. What type of oversight has the component performed and at what service level?
8. How did the component ensure that geographically separated units were adequately support with voting assistance.
9. How did the component ensure that adequate levels of voting materials (Voting Assistance Guides, Federal Post Card Applications (FPCA's), and Federal Write in Absentee Ballots) were delivered to the installation and unit voting assistance officers?

RECOMMENDED INSPECTING COMMAND CHECKLIST (CONT'D)
VOTING ASSISTANCE OFFICER (Installation level)

1. How did the installation commander ensure command support at all levels for the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)?
2. Has a civilian employee at the GS-12 level or above or a 04/E8 been assigned to serve as the VAO? Provide name, rank or grade, and phone number.
3. Who did the VAO submit a copy of their appointment letter to?
4. How were the command Voting Officers (VO) assigned?
5. How did the SVAO ensure that VAOs and VOs were assigned to all local and tenant commands and geographically separated units?
6. Could the VAO provide names and rank for the VOs?
7. Has the SVAO, VAO and VO received voter assistance training and what type?
8. How did the SVAO and VAO ensure and track that all service members and VOs received at least one briefing, training period, or information period of instruction devoted to absentee registration and voting?
9. How did the VAO ensure that VOs had adequate levels of voting materials, (Voting Assistance Guides, Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs), and Federal Write in Absentee Ballots)?
10. How did the VAO develop comprehensive command-wide voting awareness, assistance and activities? Additionally, what activities and programs were conducted during Armed Forces Voters Week?
11. How has the SVAO ensured the command telephone directory includes the names and telephone numbers for the VAO and the VOs?

RECOMMENDED INSPECTING COMMAND CHECKLIST (CONT'D)
VOTING ASSISTANCE OFFICER

12. How did the SVAO, VAO and VO ensure that there was adequate voting assistance access to the Internet, fax or toll-free phone for all servicemembers and their families, and DOD employees?

13. How has the VAO publicize the following to the VOs:

- a. Link to the components voting assistance homepage?
- b. Links to the FVAP website?

14. Did the command establish a well advertised fixed location where absentee voting materials and assistance is available to all-military personnel, family members, and DOD employees? Additionally were training sessions available to family members and DOD employees? Provide location, how staffed and dates of training sessions.

15. How did command ensure that servicemembers, their family members, and DOD employees that are on permanent change of station orders are provided FPCAs during check-in processing?

16. Is there a system in place to track the VO's in-hand delivery of the SF-76's, FPCAs to all servicemembers, their family members, and DOD employees? The system may include number or percent contacted.

a. 15 January to all eligible voters and their voting age dependents.

b. 15 August even numbered year for OCONUS DOD voters.

c. 7 September even numbered years for all CONUS DOD voters.

17. How much time is spent performing SNVAO, VAO and VO duties?

18. Has the VAO filed an after action report on the voting program and to whom?

**RECOMMENDED INSPECTING COMMAND CHECKLIST
VOTING OFFICERS (VO)**

1. Has the command assigned an officer or chief petty officer (O2/E7 or above) as the VO?
2. Has the VO received the required training?
3. Does the VO have copies of the current Voting Assistance Guide and Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs)?
4. If deployed or stationed OCONUS, does the VO have a sufficient stock of Federal Write in Absentee Ballots (FWAB) on hand?
5. How did the VO ensure and track that all servicemembers received at least one briefing, training period, or information period of instruction devoted to absentee registration and voting?
6. How did the VO ensure and track in-hand delivery of the FPCA to each servicemember, eligible dependents, and DOD employees?
7. Has the VO ensured that their name and telephone number were published in the command telephone directory and with the base operator?
8. What actions did the VO take to ensure servicemembers, eligible dependents, and DOD employees were aware of the following:
 - a. The Federal Voter Assistance program web-site?
 - b. The voting information newsletter?
 - c. IVAO and UVAO names and phone numbers?
 - d. Command sponsored fixed voting information location?

DEFINITIONS

1. Assistant Voting Officer (AVO). A civilian or servicemember who assist the VO as necessary.
2. Eligible Voter. A Uniformed Services voter is defined as active duty members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marines, including family members, who are absent from the place of residence where they are otherwise qualified to vote, or an "overseas voter" defined as an absent Uniformed Services voter who, by reason of active duty or service is absent from the United States on date of the election involved, or persons who reside outside the United States and are qualified to vote in the last place in which they were domiciled before leaving the United States, or persons who reside outside the United States and (but for such residence) would be qualified to vote in the last place in which they were domiciled before leaving the United States.
3. Federal Office. The Office of the President and the Vice President; Presidential Elector; Member of U.S. Senate, Member of U.S. House of Representatives; Resident Commissioner from Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; or Delegate from American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, or Virgin Islands.
4. Local Election. An election for candidates for a local office, such as municipal, county, township or village elections, or referendums of local interest.
5. Navy Voting Action Officer (NVAO). An individual assigned by the SNVR, GS-12 or above or a servicemember in paygrade O-4 or above who manages the NVAP.
6. Official Survey. A survey of citizens covered by 42 U.S.C. section 1973ff (reference (b)) as required for report to the President and Congress.
7. Poll. Any request for information, which requires or implies the necessity of an answer, with the intent being to report or publish compiled results of the answers obtained.
8. Senior Navy Voting Representative (SNVR). A uniformed officer of general or flag rank responsible for implementation and management of the NVAP.

DEFINITIONS (CONTD)

9. Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO). An individual GS-12 or above or a servicemember in paygrade 0-4 or above responsible for the NVAP at the major command level.
10. State Election. Any election held solely, or in part, for selecting, nominating, or electing any candidate for any State office, such as governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, or State legislator, or on issues of statewide interest.
11. Voting Assistance Officer (VAO). An individual GS-12 or above or a servicemember in paygrade 0-4 /E-8 or above responsible for the NVAP at the installation command level.
12. Voting Officer (VO). A servicemember in paygrade 0-2 or above or E-7 or above responsible for the unit or command levels voting assistance program.
13. Voting Residence. The Legal residence or domicile in which the voter is registered to vote.